

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Staffing Committee**
held on Thursday, 15th January, 2015 at Committee Suite 1,2 & 3, Westfields,
Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

PRESENT

Councillor R Domleo (Chairman)
Councillor H Murray (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors D Flude (Sub for Cllr Jackson), D Marren, B Moran, B Murphy,
D Newton and L Smetham (Sub for Cllr Brown)

Officers

Mike Suarez, Chief Executive
Bronwen MacArthur Williams, Corporate Health and Safety Manager
Rosie Ottewill, Organisational Development Manager
Dinah Robertson, HR Business Partner
Sally Gold, Legal Services
Rachel Graves, Democratic Services Officer

15 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors D Brown and J Jackson.

16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

17 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION

There were no members of the public present.

18 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 23 October 2014 be approved as
a correct record.

19 HEALTH AND SAFETY UPDATE

The Committee received a report which provided a general update on
health and safety matters.

The Corporate Health and Safety Manager report that 17 corporate health
and safety courses had been delivered during quarter 3, which had been
attended by 170 staff members.

The Corporate Health and Safety Policy had been completely refreshed and had been through the agreed consultation route. The Committee was advised that this was the final opportunity to make any further recommendations before the document was forwarded to the Head of Paid Service for approval.

The Quarter 3 accident and incident statistics showed a total of 665 accidents in the corporate core area, with 15 RIDDOR reportable accidents. Details of the monthly statistics for October, November and December 2014 were circulated at the meeting.

The Committee had been informed at its last meeting that it was more appropriate for the Cheshire Residents First Board to issue an annual report to the Committee on the accident and incident statistics of the Alternative Service Delivery Vehicles. It was asked if this report could be expanded to include details for Cheshire Highways and other contractors.

The Committee also asked about accident and incident statistics for the schools in Cheshire - maintained schools, faith schools, free schools and academies, and asked where this information was reported to.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

20 HR AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

The Organisational Development Manager presented a report which provided a general update on human resources issues.

It was reported that the Making A Difference annual staff awards had taken place in December 2014. The winners of each category were as follows:

- Employee of the year for support staff 2014:
Jonathan Sayer
- Employee of the year for front line staff 2014:
Becky Yates
- First-time manager of the year 2014:
Lee Hudson
- Manager of the year 2014:
Jonathan Potter
- Team of the year for collaboration 2014 – joint winners:
Connecting Cheshire Partnership
Supported Employment Team
- Team of the year for outstanding service 2014:
Youth Crime Prevention
- Members' choice 2014 – joint winners:
Lorraine Rushton
Congleton and Macclesfield SMART

- Corporate Leadership Board award for community impact:
Housing Options
- Deputy Leader's award for special public service:
Tim Kingston
- Leader's Award for employee of the year:
Sue Walczak

As part of the Council's continued work to build staff engagement, there was a proposal to hold four half day conferences entitled the 'Big Event', which would share and update colleagues on the opportunities and challenges ahead for the Council. The Committee expressed an interest in the events, asking about attendance, post event evaluation and costings.

A new and market leading employee recruitment system known as Taleo was expected to go live on 15 January 2015. Jointly commissioned with Cheshire West and Chester Council and CoScious, the new system would replace the current vacancy management system which was no longer fit for purpose. The Taleo system supported the end to end recruitment cycle from identifying the need/vacancy through to sourcing potential candidates, engaging and managing candidates through the process, completing checks and formalities and bringing them into the Council. The Committee asked that the access to job opportunities was not confined to on-line applications but tailored to the potential candidate pool and ensuring access to disabled and disadvantaged applicants.

Work would commence shortly to develop the Council's Workforce Strategy for 2015/18. The outcomes of the workforce strategy were as follows:

- Have an agile, multi-skilled, engaged and high performing workforce able to respond to the challenges and opportunities ahead
- Where appropriate attract and retain the best people from all sectors of the community to work for the Council
- Share and deploy available resources across the Council in the best way to ensure priorities are achieved.

The Committee commented on objectives and themes of the Workforce Strategy. Further details would be brought to the Committee in due course.

Shared parental leave was a new legal entitlement for eligible parents of babies due, or children placed for adoption, on or after 5 April 2015 and allowed both parents with the opportunity to consider the best arrangements to care for their child during the child's first year. As a result of the legislation, HR would be reviewing the Council's maternity; paternity and adoption leave and pay policies and procedures to make the necessary administrative changes. The Committee would be updated on any changes to these policies once the review had been completed.

Work was being undertaken on the possibility of using pay variance to support the retention of key staff on an exceptional basis. The Committee expressed a number of reservations in doing this and it was agreed that further work would be carried out on the policy.

The Council was required to produce and publish a pay policy statement by 31 March on an annual basis. Cabinet would be considering the pay policy at its next meeting and make recommendations to Council on 26 February for adoption. A copy of the draft pay policy was shared with the Committee. A shorter version of the pay policy had been developed which focused on the Council's broad pay principles and policies which would require minimal updating each year. Further information would be provided by web based links which could be updated as appropriate – providing a relevant and reader friendly format.

It was reported that six people had left under the voluntary redundancy terms in Quarter 3. The total severance costs for all six employees were £275,636 inclusive of redundancy and actuarial costs. It was estimated that over the next five years, these reductions would save the Council over £1,095,555. The terms for voluntary redundancy would be reviewed in September 2015.

The Council was providing 200+ work experience sessions for young adults and school children and arranging 50 apprenticeship pathways for schools and college leavers into employment. Three people with learning difficulties had been offered Apprenticeships and of these, two had moved into permanent roles with the Council. Just under 3% of Apprentices had declared a disability. In addition the Supported Employment Teams supported individuals with various disabilities into paid employment within the Council and external organisations.

The Gold and Silver HR consultancy packages had been bought back by 138 schools, which was a slight decrease on last year due to some schools joining Multi Academy Trusts which provided their own HR support.

The changes to the disciplinary, grievance and dignity at work policies and procedures, reported at the last meeting, had now been considered by the Corporate Leadership Board and Trade Unions and the policies and procedures are in the process of amendment. It was asked if the proceedings resulting from these policies and the appeal hearings could be tape recorded. The Committee was in support of the idea. Officers agreed to explore the idea further and report back to the Committee.

The cumulative average days lost to sickness in the third quarter were slightly higher than in the previous financial year. It was agreed that a special meeting should be held to discuss sickness absence in more detail.

RESOLVED:

- 1 That the report be noted.
- 2 A special meeting of Staffing Committee be held to discuss sickness absence.

21 SENIOR MANAGEMENT RESTRUCTURE - EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND PROSPERITY

The Committee considered a report which detailed the job description for the position of Executive Director Economic Growth and Prosperity.

Council, at its meeting on 11 December 2014, had agreed to the creation of a new role of Executive Director Economic Growth and Prosperity to strengthen the Council's Senior Leadership capacity in preparation for significant developments in economic development and regeneration.

The role had been evaluated and fell within the existing senior manager grade range of £110,000 to £120,000 per annum plus a possible Performance Related Pay of up to £10,000 per annum in accordance with the Council's Pay Policy.

RESOLVED:

That the Job Description of the role of Executive Director Economic Growth and Prosperity be noted.

22 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED:

That the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item, in pursuant to Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and public interest would not be served in publishing this information.

23 SENIOR MANAGEMENT RESTRUCTURE - EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH & PROSPERITY - STAFF IMPLICATIONS

The Committee considered a report on the appointment of the position of Executive Director Economic Growth and Prosperity.

RESOLVED:

- 1 That Caroline Simpson be assimilated into the role of Executive Director Economic Growth and Prosperity, subject to the approval of Cabinet.

- 2 the Chief Executive be instructed to take the necessary steps to impellent the decision.

The meeting commenced at 2.00 pm and concluded at 4.30 pm

Councillor R M Domleo (Chairman)